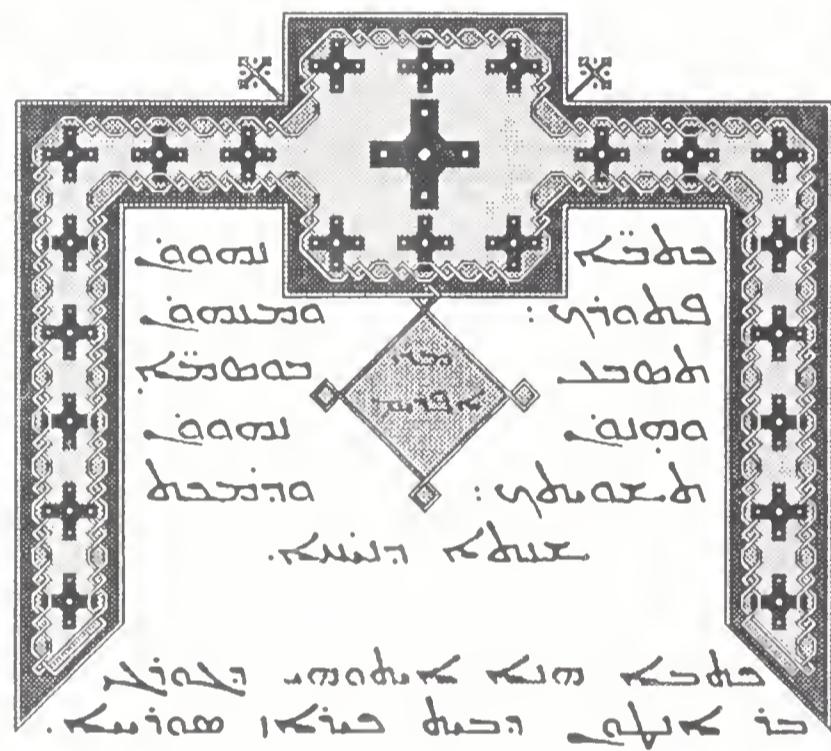




THE LIFE OF THE GREAT MARTYR



SAINT GEORGE



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THE LIFE OF
THE GREAT MARTYR
SAINT GEORGE

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His Holiness Pope Shenouda III
117th Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and the see of St. Mark

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INTRODUCTION

Martyrdom is the sign of profound love which pushed the martyr to give up his life, counting it as nothing if compared with his love for Christ, saying with the Apostle: *“I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ”*(Phil 3:8).

Love was the source of Saint George’s courage. He was put through countless, ruthless tortures. yet he still clung to his Christ. He clung to the One he loved . . . to the end . . . he clung to Him up to death.

Every drop of blood shed from Saint George’s body declared the extent of his love and the extent of his adherence to the Lord.

Martyrdom is the outstanding sign of Christianity because by love, the Lord says, *“all will know that you are My disciples”*(Jn 13:35). Martyrdom does not only mean the killing of the body but man can be a martyr if he abides in Christ and in His love. . . if he remains in his faith despite all challenges, hardships and obstacles.

Therefore we also can, by putting Saint George's love before us, become martyrs when we abhor sin, shun temptation and strive against all that separates us from Christ.

Let us remind ourselves of the Lord's words: "*Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven*"(Mt 10:32,33).

So when we cling to our Christ, heaven will rejoice and we will enjoy hearing the Father's voice saying to each of us: "*This is My beloved son, in whom I am well pleased*"(Mt 3:17).

Even though the path to the Kingdom of Heaven is narrow, rugged and painful, our love for Christ will ease it for us because He promised that He would support the weak and wipe away every tear.

Let us then put before us this great Saint in his love, courage and martyrdom and follow in his steps, declaring our love to our great God, trusting that: "*He who does the will of God abides for ever*"(1Jn 1:17).





CHAPTER ONE

FAMILY

“Unless an ear of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit”(Jn 12:24)

Anastasius was a good example of a true Christian and faithful servant of the Lord. He lived in Cappadocia, Asia Minor, with his wife Theobesta and their son George was born in 280 A.D.

Anastasius's honesty made the ruler of Cappadocia love him and entrust him with a high position in the government. Yet no sooner did the ruler realize that Anastasius was a faithful Christian than he ordered that he be beheaded. So Anastasius received the crown of martyrdom when our Saint was nearly seventeen years of age.

The seed of faith, which Anastasius and Theobesta planted in the heart of their son and nourished by their teaching and living examples, flourished when George saw his father's blood shed for the sake of their Saviour. From that moment, our Saint went through a new experience; he tasted the sweetness of the Divine love and found himself coming closer to his Saviour in a deeper relationship. Now he had a new aspiration in

life and eagerly waited to grasp the opportunity to receive the crown of martyrdom for the sake of the Crucified.

After her husband's martyrdom, righteous Theobesta had no aim in life other than to continue the responsibility of bringing up her son in the true Christian belief. Her only pleasure and consolation was to see him grow in grace, virtue and every good deed.

THE HOLY ATHLETE

Before reaching the age of seventeen, our Saint had joined the Roman Army and was distinguished for his bravery. He fought and gained victory in many battles in Palestine and Egypt, so he was promoted to the rank of Tribune.

Saint George lost his mother whom God willed to rest when he was nearly twenty years old. He accepted the Lord's will with complete submission and the Lord filled entirely the void left by her death.

From then on Saint George abandoned the love of the world and its pleasures, distributed all his possessions among the poor and set his slaves and maidservants free.

CHAPTER TWO

PERSECUTION

“In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”
(Jn 16:33)

THE EMPEROR'S EDICT

Emperor Diocletian, the ruler of the Roman Empire at the time, started a tyrannous campaign against whoever called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. During the feast of the pagan god Apollo, he went to the Church of Nicomedia accompanied by multitudes of people, broke down its doors, burnt its holy books and iconostasis and destroyed its walls. Moreover, he issued an Imperial edict and ordered that it be observed all over the Empire. The provisions of the edict were that:

1. All churches shall be completely destroyed
2. Every Christian holy book shall be burned
3. Christians who are employees of the government shall be dismissed from their jobs, deprived of their national rights and their possessions seized
4. Christian non-employees of the government shall be made slaves
5. Sacrifices and incense shall be offered in the temples of the Roman gods

COURAGE

“The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”(Ps 27:1)

Saint George was in Alexandria when he saw the Emperor's edict. He decided in his heart that honourable martyrdom was better than a life of humiliation. He longed to be a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ and felt that the opportunity had come. So, in the fortitude of youth, in the depth of faith and the courage of knighthood, he approached boldly in the midst of the crowds, before all the people and pulled down the Imperial edict, read it, fiercely tore it up and threw it on the ground.

Everyone watching marvelled at the youth's courage. Yet no sooner did he turn around than the soldiers arrested him, took him and sent him to the ruler of Cappadocia to receive his punishment.

STEADFASTNESS

“I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed”(Ps 119:46)

As Saint George enjoyed great favour with Emperor Diocletian, the ruler of Cappadocia transferred the case to him. When Saint George stood before the Emperor and his men, he said to them: “Until when will you persecute the innocent Christians and hate those who know the true faith because they do not follow your religion which you

yourselves are not sure of ? Either believe in the true Religion or at least do not foolishly disturb those who abide by it.”

On hearing this, the Emperor ordered his minister Miphanius to calm the speaker down. So Miphanius asked the Saint: “Who taught you this boldness?”

The Saint replied: “The Truth.”

When the Saint started to explain to the minister the meaning of the Truth and Who is the Truth, Diocletian interrupted and reminded Saint George of the medals and ranks he had granted him, promising to grant him more if he denounced his Christ. But the Saint refused, disdaining all those worldly offers.

When the Emperor’s attempts to coax the Saint and make him yield came to naught, he started to threaten him. Yet because he loved him, he would return and forgive him after every threat. He could not find in him anything but steadfastness in faith and readiness to die for the sake of Christ.

CHASTITY

“How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?” (Gen 39:9)

The Emperor ordered that Saint George be put in prison. Then he tried to tempt him by attacking his purity, unaware of the fact that behind the Saint’s bravery and strong faith lay a life of chastity.

Saint George was a youth who knew how to offer his youth on the altar of purity in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Emperor sent him one of the most beautiful palace courtesans who stayed with him a whole night trying to seduce him by her beauty and make him sin with her. But the Saint transformed the prison cell into a sanctified altar from which prayers arose, not only for himself but also for the salvation of the soul of that wretched woman.

THE SWORD OF PRAYER

“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much”(Jas 5:16)

Before morning had come, the woman approached Saint George in tears, requesting him to show her the secret of the life of purity and sanctity which she had encountered in him. So the Saint began to preach to her the Lord Jesus Christ; the Fountainhead of Purity.

When the Emperor's men came in the morning to take her to the Emperor, they found the loose woman clothed in the robe of decency and ornamented with modesty, openly declaring and confessing her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, her King and Saviour. So instead of her attracting the Saint by the magic of her wantonness, he had attracted her to Christianity by the power of his sanctity. Everyone was astounded at this news, especially the Emperor who issued an order to behead the repentant woman at once. Thus she received the crown of martyrdom with those of the eleventh hour.

CHAPTER THREE

TORTURES

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?”(Rom 8:35)

As temptations failed to weaken the great Saint, the Emperor started to employ ruthless methods. He put Saint George through a series of tortures planned by seventy rulers who had gathered to form methods for torturing those who witnessed to Christ.

CHAINED

“For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die...for the name of the Lord Jesus”(Acts 21:13)

The Emperor ordered that the Saint be thrown in prison and stretched out on the ground with his hands and legs tied by heavy chains. When the soldiers had carried out those orders, they threw a huge stone on his chest and left him. The following morning when they came to see what had become of him, he replied firmly: “You will get bored torturing me but I shall never get bored enduring the tortures, by the grace of my God.”

RIPPED BY IRON SPIKES

“We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter”(Ps 44:22)

The soldiers took Saint George out of prison, stripped his clothes off and stretched him over the top of a surface of iron spikes. They started to pull him roughly to and fro over the spikes till his body was lacerated, his flesh torn and fragmented and his blood poured out.

BURNT

“But he who endures to the end will be saved”(Mt 10:22)

After this, the soldiers brought flaming torches and passed them over the Saint’s body to burn his wounds and spread salt over the wounds to increase his pain. But Saint George endured these severe tortures when he raised his heart to his Lover’s Cross and drew comfort.

The cruel soldiers were not satisfied and it pleased them to throw him onto a carpet of coarse straw which was dyed scarlet by his pure blood.

THE LORD OF GLORY APPEARS

“And Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”(Mt 28:20)

While the Saint lay soaked in his blood, his mind was taken up in heavenly thoughts contemplating the Blood that gushed out from his Saviour’s side. Suddenly a great

light shone around him in his dark cell and the Lord of Glory Himself appeared, embraced him and said: “*Do not be afraid, George, because I am with you.*”

As soon as the Lord touched Saint George’s wounds, they were completely healed. When the guards saw the light coming from the prison cell and heard the movement of the prisoner whom they had left nearly dead, they hurried, terrified, to tell the Emperor.

GIVEN POISON

“*And if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them*”(Mk 16:18)

The Emperor did not believe the guards until he called Saint George and saw for himself that he was sound and healthy. Perplexed at this, he thought that some sort of magic act had healed the Saint, so he summoned Athanasius, the cleverest magician in the Kingdom who was very conceited and believed in his magic.

The Emperor asked him: “Can you, by your cleverness and magic, defeat this Christian who has mocked me and the tortures I have put him through?”

“My death will be better than my life,” replied the magician, “if this man can withstand the effect of my magic.”

Then Athanasius took a cup of wine, mixed in with it a large quantity of a strong and fatal poison, and gave it to Saint George to drink. Saint George made the

sign of the cross on the cup and drank all the poison. The multitudes who stood watching him expected him to fall dead in every ensuing second. But their expectation was unfulfilled because the Saint remained unshaken with a bright face. Everybody gazed at him in amazement and surprise. The magician's face turned pale and he hastily presented him another cup containing double the previous quantity of poison. The Saint did as before and by the power of the cross was not affected by the deadly poison.

Shouts of surprise rose from the crowds but the humiliated magician collected his powers anew, tried a final time and failed.

Overwhelmed by astonishment the crowds cried out declaring their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. Athanasius fell on his knees at the Saint's feet, begged his forgiveness and declared his belief in the God of Saint George before the Emperor and the attendants.

The Emperor was extremely vexed and ordered that Athanasius be beheaded immediately. So, together with hundreds of the attendants, Athanasius received the crown of martyrdom.



DEATH

“We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed”
(2Cor 4:8)

Emperor Diocletian ordered that the Saint be tortured by the water wheel. The soldiers carried out this torture until the Saint died. Then they threw his dead body outside the city. But the Lord Jesus Christ brought him back to life, so he entered the city where everybody saw him. On seeing him, 3,700 people accepted the faith. The Emperor ordered that they all be beheaded, so that number also received the crown of martyrdom.

TORTURED BY SHARP BLADES

“The Lord is righteous; He has cut in pieces the cords of the wicked”(Ps 129:4)

The Emperor ordered that Saint George be stretched over sharp blades to cut his body. When the soldiers attempted to carry out this torture, their blades fell to pieces and scattered on the ground.

RUNNING IN SHOES OF NAILS

“That I may know Him...and the fellowship of His sufferings”(Phil 3:10)

The Emperor remained unaffected by all that he had seen. In fact, his heart hardened even further and his vexation increased. So he ordered his soldiers to bring

a pair of shoes, fix many nails into their soles, put them on the Saint's feet and make him run in them.

The soldiers obeyed and ordered the Saint to run without stopping. As he ran, his feet were torn by the nails piercing them. He lifted up his eyes to the Cross of his Lover and contemplated the nails that pierced the feet of the blameless Lord of Glory. So he felt ecstatic and forgot every pain.

Whenever he stopped for a second, the soldiers beat him to make him run faster. When the soldiers grew tired, they grabbed him and threw him in prison. But in spite of all his afflictions and pains, our hero Saint George rejoiced because he had deserved to experience the nails that had pierced the feet of his Saviour.

SCOURGING

“We are . . . struck down, but not destroyed”(2Cor 4:9)

The following day, the soldiers received orders to whip the Saint. They whipped him mercilessly till his blood gushed out and he fell unconscious from the severity of the pain. Then the soldiers took him and threw him in prison.

Early the next morning, the soldiers hurried to his cell to find out how he was. To their astonishment, they found him smiling at them, his body completely sound as if nothing had touched him.

DIPPED IN UNSLAKED LIME

“The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire”(Ps 29:7)

Even though Emperor Diocletian had seen heaven's intervention in healing the Saint after every type of torture, his heart was unmoved. Where he failed by one method, he proceeded to use another. This time he ordered that the Saint be dipped in a tank of burning hot unslaked lime and be left in it for three days so that he might die at last and relieve the Emperor's heart.

The soldiers proceeded to carry out the tyrant's orders. But the Saint's heart, which had tasted the pleasure of pain and the power of the Cross, was strengthened. He made the sign of the cross on himself and obediently approached to enter the burning fire in the unslaked lime.

The voice of the Lord quenched the burning heat of the fire and its heat turned into coolness. The Saint remembered the three saintly youths who had also been through that trial, and started to praise the Lord, singing: “Blessed are You, O Lord, God of our fathers and greatly blessed and greatly exalted for ever...Bless the Lord, O all you works of the Lord, praise Him and greatly exalt Him for ever ... Bless the Lord, O you fire and heat, praise Him and greatly exalt Him for ever . . .”

On the morning of the third day, the soldiers came to take out the Saint's body which they imagined must have become like a withered branch, and present it to the Emperor to hide it from the Christians lest they take it

and venerate it. Yet to their great astonishment they found the Saint completely sound and unharmed, with a smile on his lips which had never ceased praising the Lord. Everyone wondered at the mystery of peace and joy that the Saint was living. Then the soldiers hauled him to the Emperor.

When Emperor Diocletian saw that no amount of tortures would dissuade Saint George from his strong will and steadfast faith, he tried to coax him, saying: "I will give you my daughter in marriage and make you the second man in the Empire if you will offer incense before the gods." Then he gave orders that the Saint be released from prison and taken to the palace as his guest. In the palace he begged the Saint to submit himself to the gods for fear of their anger. Saint George answered him: "Tomorrow you will see the power of the gods."

A NIGHT IN THE PALACE

Empress Alexandra had been wondering over the Saint's courage of which she had heard a lot and was waiting for the moment when she could ask him the secret behind his courage, his purity and his miracles. That night she heard him praying the Psalms and asked him to explain them to her. The Saint preached to her the Lord of Glory Jesus Christ Who saves our lives from corruption, starting from the beginning of Creation until His Incarnation. She was deeply affected by his words and their discourse ended in her belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

IN THE MORNING

“Let all be put to shame who serve carved images”
(Ps 97:7)

A rumour spread that Saint George was going to raise incense before the Roman gods, so all the people came to watch him. The day happened to be a great feast day and every road was packed with spectators. The soldiers lined up to salute their friend and leader who had yielded to the religion of the Empire.

In the great procession and amidst the applause of the crowds, Saint George went forward, stood before the huge idol Apollo and raised his heart to his God, the Creator of heaven and earth. After deep prayer, he turned towards the big statue Apollo and said: “If you are the true God, reveal your power to the multitudes.”

A voice, heard by everyone present, came out of the statue, saying: “The true God is the God you worship. We are only disobedient angels. We are devils.”

Saint George made the sign of the cross on himself and answered the voice saying: “How dare you stand here in front of me? I am a slave of my Lord Jesus Christ, the true God.”

Immediately the statue collapsed on the ground and all the other idols fell down, smashing into pieces. Then the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them. The spectators were terrified and scattered whereas the priests of the gods screamed, saying: “Down with this magician who has crushed our gods!” So the soldiers jumped on the

Saint and chained him, but the people shouted: “We are Christians! We believe in the God of Saint George!”

THE EMPEROR’S FAILURE

“The wicked will see it and be grieved; He will gnash his teeth and melt away”(Ps 112:10)

Gnashing his teeth, the perplexed Emperor glared at Saint George and threatened him with the most fatal tortures. The Saint looked at him and said: “I did nothing but pray to heaven so that the true God might be revealed to us. Your gods, Emperor, are nothing but devils. Ever since eternity, the devils have believed in the true God and tremble. They confessed many times before the Lord of Glory, saying: “We know who You are - the Holy One of God,” and the Lord rebuked them because He did not accept their testimony and hated their unfruitful belief.”

MARTYRDOM OF EMPRESS ALEXANDRA

“I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held... and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they had been, was completed”(Rev 6:9)

When the Emperor went home, he complained and revealed to his wife his and his men’s inability to reach

a solution with that steadfast youth Saint George. However, she replied modestly: “Have I not told you several times before to leave that youth alone because his God is omnipotent and He never abandons those who love and worship Him?”

That was the second shock to strike Diocletian and it blackened the whole world in front of his eyes. He quickly called his guards and ordered them to drag Alexandra by her hair and hang her up in the palace hall, claw her body with iron spikes, strike her with rods and then behead her.

The guards did as they were ordered. The Empress rejoiced because she resembled the heroic youth Saint George, but was anxious about one thing. She was afraid that as she would die without receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, she would not be able to see the Kingdom of God. While she was pondering over this, she saw the soldiers leading Saint George to prison. She called out to him, saying: “Tell me, my brother George, what will befall me if I die without being baptised?”

The Saint replied: “Pure Empress, your blood which is shed for your love to your Redeemer is itself a sacred baptism which will open to you the doors of Paradise.” Alexandra rejoiced when she heard the Saint’s words and courageously approached to be martyred, saying joyfully: “Lord, I have left the door of my palace open, do not shut the door of Paradise in front of me. You Who accepted the repentance of the Penitent Thief, accept my repentance.”

She was beheaded, received the crown of martyrdom and her soul went to her Saviour in the everlasting bliss.

MARTYRDOM OF SAINT GEORGE

“These are the ones who were not defiled with women for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes ... for they are without fault before the throne of God”(Rev 14:4,5)

When the news of the Empress's martyrdom reached the ears of her husband, he grieved and was enraged with Saint George who had wasted his time and revealed his failure and incapabilities. Finally to get rid of him, Diocletian ordered that the Saint be tied to a horse's tail, dragged through the city streets and then beheaded.

The soldiers dragged the Saint through the city streets, took him outside the gates and beheaded him. His pure soul ascended to heaven and he received seven crowns.

Saint George's martyrdom took place on the 1st May (23rd Baramuda), 303 A.D., when he was twenty-three years old.

One of the Christians wrapped Saint George's body in precious linen, took it and buried it in Lydda, Palestine.

May the blessing of the Great Martyr Saint George be with the reader. Amen.

CHAPTER FOUR

SAINT GEORGE'S ICONS

Saint George is usually depicted on horseback, stabbing a dragon with the spear in his hand while a beautiful bride stands watching him from afar. This picture has a symbolic, not an actual, meaning. It expresses the conflict that existed at the time of Saint George.

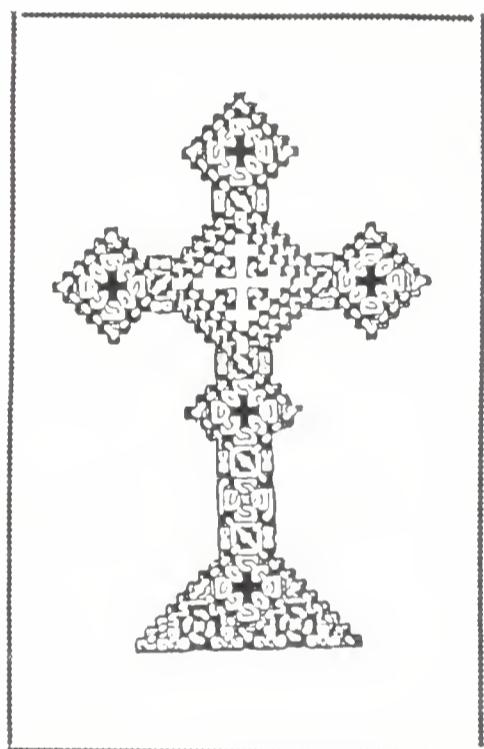
The bride symbolises the Church who joyfully watches the strivings of her children. The dragon symbolises Satan who stirred Emperor Diocletian. Saint George's life was a victory of the life of faith in Christ.

The downfall of the Devil, exemplified by Diocletian who wanted the Church to deny her God, was achieved because Diocletian's Empire was exterminated by the coming of Emperor Constantine. The bride who personified the Church has remained joyful and happy with her Bridegroom and Lover, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another icon depicts Saint George on horseback, a young lady riding behind and holding on to him, a dragon symbolising Emperor Diocletian and a bride standing afar, symbolising the Militant Church who waits for her Bridegroom.

The girl riding behind Saint George refers to the woman who entered his prison to seduce him with her wantonness and whom he was able to save from perdition by the power of his purity.

This icon also refers to the power of sanctity which was able to save the girl from the depth of sin and impurity.





THE FIRST CHURCH OF SAINT GEORGE

The first church that was named after Saint George was built in Lydda in Palestine by King Constantine. The Saint's head was buried under the altar but his sacred limbs were kept in a golden container inside the altar.

Around 900 A.D. during the era of Abba Gabriel, the 57th Patriarch of Alexandria, the relics of Saint George were brought to Egypt and have been a great blessing and a healing for many people.



SAINT GEORGE'S FEASTS

1. The Feast of his Martyrdom: 23rd Baramuda (1st May).
2. The Feast of the Consecration of the first church which was built on his name in Palestine: 7th Athor (16th November).

In addition to these two feasts, every church built in the Saint's name celebrates a feast day on every consecration day of their church.

3. In England the 23rd April is consecrated a feast day for Saint George being the Patron Saint of England.

SAINT GEORGE'S TITLES

- + Saint George the Hero
- + Saint George the Prince of Martyrs
- + Saint George the Valiant
- + Saint George the Quick to Respond
- + Saint George the Megalomartyros



SAINT GEORGE'S MIRACLES

The Lord Jesus Christ performed many miracles through our great hero Saint George during his seven years of persecution. Once a poor woman brought him her son who was blind, deaf and dumb. He prayed, made the sign of the cross on the child and the child was healed from all his disabilities.

Saint George is famous for his miracles of healing and especially those of driving out evil spirits. This is because he made the sign of the cross on himself and addressed the devil that inhabited the Roman god. The devil was overcome and the idol collapsed. Hence the devils cannot bear to hear his name mentioned in front of them and immediately flee from the human body they inhabit. Thousands of miracles are seen performed in the Saint's Church in Medamsees and in Shoubra (Cairo) every year on his feast days.

One of the recent miracles God performed through Saint George:

On Tuesday 11th September 1982, Engineer Mohsen Sabry Messieha who lives in Cairo, was admitted to the Hospital of the Military Academy at Qobry El-Qoba in Cairo for a cholecystectomy (operation for removal of the gall bladder). The results of the necessary tests prior to the operation revealed that he had new abnormalities in his body: diabetes and jaundice. A biopsy was taken from his liver and revealed a tumour. So he was referred to El-Ma'ady Hospital for another biopsy which confirmed that he had liver cancer, and that the rate of multiplication of the malignant cells was very high. The tumour began to show as an increasing swelling on his right side so he had to put cotton wool over the left side in order to conceal the tumour from his family.

During Mohsen's stay at the hospital, he started to vomit blood. The necessary test revealed that he had gastric and duodenal ulcers. This meant that he could live on water only because the treatment of gastric and duodenal ulcers antagonise each other. One of the five consultants who came to see him frankly informed him that he had seven months left to live. One of the consultants suggested that he should go with him to England to be examined and operated upon even though the success rate of the operation was only about 8%. Finally, the hospital informed him that they had no treatment for him and he was discharged on 1st November.

Mohsen started to count down the remaining days of his life. One day, El-Ma'ady Hospital told him to report to a hospital in Alexandria to be examined by a Specialist from Bulgaria. After carrying out the necessary tests and biopsy, the Specialist was only able to define the rate of growth of the cancer and confirmed that Mohsen's was a hopeless case which had no cure. So Mohsen decided to go to England and have the operation the consultant had suggested.

Whilst in Alexandria, Mohsen visited Saint George's Church in Sporting where he asked the departed Father Pishoi Kamel to pray for him. He also attended the veneration of Saint George's relics. The priest of the Church saw the wounds from the biopsy which were still unhealed because of the diabetes, and promised to pray for him.

By the beginning of December, Mohsen started to feel depressed. As he was serving in the army at the time, he went to get his clearance certificate so that he could travel to England but was shocked to be told that he had to remain longer in the army, which meant that he could not travel. It seemed that he was fated to die.

On hearing that some German doctors were staying at the Military Academy of El-Ma'ady Hospital from December to April, Mohsen went to ask if he could be examined by one of them. On his way into the hospital he saw an officer, dressed in an unusual coloured

uniform, who asked him: "Why are you late? Come with me." He took Mohsen into one of the rooms and asked him to lie down on the bed so that he could examine him. But Mohsen said: "No, if the German doctor is here, he will examine me."

The officer replied: "No, I will examine you", and started to uncover Mohsen's stomach, saying: "Shall I call you Mohsen or Lieutenant?"

Not being in the mood for joking, Mohsen answered: "Call me whatever you like but examine me if you are the one who is going to examine me."

The officer said: "By the way, many people have asked me to take particular care of you."

Mohsen asked: "Who?"

The officer replied: "People to whom you are important."

Mohsen asked again: "Who are they?"

The officer gave no reply but said: "Now, lie down. We will remove what troubles you and relieve you, and be relieved ourselves." Then he laid his hand on Mohsen's side and said: "In the name of the Cross." He kept raising his eyes to the ceiling and then looking down at Mohsen's side. As he was doing this, he said: "We remove this part . . . and this part . . . there is still this part"

Every time Mohsen groaned from the pain, the officer said: "It is all right: we are removing it." When he finished, he lifted his hand off Mohsen's side, smiled and said: "*'Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God.'* Here is your report. There are only a few things left. I will see to them when you come to me again."

Mohsen asked: "Where shall I come to you ? I do not know where to find you."

"Come to me at the place you saw me before."

"But I have not seen you before."

"Yes, you have!"

"I have not!"

"I say *you have!*"

"Where ?"

"In Alexandria. Peace be with you."

The officer left and Mohsen had a look at his side. He saw clearly that the unhealed wounds had vanished and the swelling on his side had disappeared. He jumped off the bed and looked at the report. His eyes caught the signature: "George" written in red with the sign of the cross over it. Half undressed, he hurried out of the room to call back the Saint whom he only recognized by his signature. He did not see him so he quickly dressed himself and hurried to search for him, but in vain.

Mohsen went home and that night, strangely enough, he went through the normal post operation pain, high temperature and weakness. The following morning, Mohsen went to Saint George's Church in Alexandria and met the priest who, learning that he was healed from the cancer but still suffered from the ulcers, interpreted the Saint's words to mean that he would complete the healing there in his Church. So the priest asked all the deacons to sing a hymn of veneration to the Saint after which Mohsen went on his own to light

a candle before the Saint's icon. Whilst doing the sign of the cross on the icon with the candle, Mohsen saw that the face of the Saint on the icon was exactly the same as the face of the officer. Then he heard a voice say: "It is completed." He looked behind him to see who was addressing him, but no one was there, so he turned to the icon and asked: "What did you say?" The voice replied: "I say to you: it is completed." And it was completed. At that moment, Mohsen was healed from the remaining illnesses in his body. Then he returned home to Cairo.

Although the miracle of Mohsen's healing was witnessed by the priests of St. Mark's Church in Cairo and St. George's in Alexandria, yet Mohsen did not stop at that. The day after returning from Alexandria he went to his doctor who was non-Christian and informed him of the healing. On seeing Mohsen's stomach, the doctor dropped the cup of tea he was drinking and wept. He said to Mohsen: "I know that the Virgin Mary does such healing but I never knew that Saint George understood medicine. Please, do me a favour and come with me to one of the consultants who saw your case and let him examine you."

When they met the consultant and asked him to examine Mohsen, he replied: "My dear Mohsen, you are like a son to me. If there was the slightest chance for you, I would have told you. But to let you have peace of mind I will examine you again as you wish." At the first glimpse of Mohsen's side, the consultant

was taken aback and called for someone to shut the door. He started to look with wonder at the places where the cancer and the two wounds had been. After a long period of utter silence, he asked: "Mohsen? Who did this operation? The Virgin Mary?"

"No, Saint George," Mohsen replied.

The consultant said: "You had better go home and, by order, never come here again. Do not let any human hand be put on your side after it has been touched by saints of your religion."

Mohsen replied: "So our Lord teaches us: '*What is impossible for men is possible for God.*' "

MAY HIS HOLY NAME BE GLORIFIED
FOR EVER. AMEN

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CLIMAX OF DIVINE LOVE SERIES

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3. Abba Pishoi
4. Saint George the Martyr
5. The Virgin Mary
6. Saint Michael the Archangel
7. Saint Mark
8. Saint Athanasius

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Saint George the Martyr (280-303), the patron saint of England and many other countries, is one of the most famous of the early martyrs. This book contains some historical particulars of his valiant life and glimpses of his unspeakable endurance of ruthless tortures for the sake of the Christian Faith.

ISBN 0268 7011-4